THE SONGS OF SOME OLD AND NEW SINGERS.

A posthumous volume is the most conspicuous among those collections of verse which have recently come from the press. The poems by Christina Rossetti, hitherto unpublished or uncollected, have been edited by her brother, and they come swiftly to the front at the present time; partly because they are new, but still more because their author belongs among the most interesting poets of her century, and the book contains a number of characteristic lyries. As though through some happy convergence of events toward the appropriate reintroduction of her noble strain, the poets who surround her in the year's harvest are, with few exceptions, worthy to stand by her side. The irritating type of minor poet is never mute in England, but for the nonce he retires into the background. In the long list of volumes presented for appraisal at this time there are not many which strike an infelicitous note

A DEVOTIONAL POET.

To preface an account of the "New Poems Christina Rossetti" (Macmillan & Co.) with some criticism of the editor, William Michael Rossetti, is unfortunate but necessary. He has done much to provoke adverse comment. Chris tina's memory, he says, "is one of my most sacred treasures, and her works and their repute are proportionately dear to me." Yet he does not hesitate to take obvious liberties with that memory, exceeding what would appear to be the reasonable sphere of his discretion in regard to the fortunes of his sister's work, and assuming altogether too much in his decisions as to the steps required to be taken for the preservation of her repute. He has assumed to say which of her unpublished poems would go to "sustain her poetical reputation, or be substantial interest as showing the growth of her mind." That last clause is a comprehensive one, and under its protection William Rossetti has made a volume of nearly four hundred pages, which, in deference to his sister's high standard, ought to have been reduced to half the size. She would not have published all the immature and experimental poems in this collection, and it is even doubtful as to whether she would have printed many which the reader must delight.

It is a testimony to the worth of Christina Rossetti's poetry that no editorial clumsiness of her brother's could mar the beauty of the impression which her best poems leave. She was rarely passionate to any strenuous degree. never stirs the blood with a trumpet blast. But she never wanted to do this. Her suppression of the three emotional poems which her brother has chosen to reprint from the edition of 1862 is indicative of the mond to which she preferred to Why did she regret, as she give expression. seemed to regret, the bitterness and proud defiance of "Sister Mande"? Because neither the defiance nor the bilterness was natural to her spiritual and profoundly pictistic mind. Selfsuppression, or, if not that, then a keen sense of the evanescence of mortal things, waited upon her poetical fusion of familiar experience with imaginative feeling; and she no more cared to do violence to the serene measure of her daily life than she did to the high musings of her re ligious mind. She knew the power of flerce passion, and sometimes she was swept off her feet, poetically, by its impetus. Then, as in some hot gust of stormy feeling, she could write "Sister Maude" or the polgnant lines entitled "Look on This Picture and On This." It was from this acquaintance with headstrong human impulse and aching human wounds, partly a matter of individual genius, partly a morbid streak of temerament which she shared with Dante Rossetti, that she drew some of her power. But the dust and futility of such rebellious phases of life as she now and then was moved to celebrate in tense and vivid verse she more often recognized at their exact value, and she fixed her gaze steadfastly upon the principle embodied in the conclusion to a long poem written in 1853, "To What Purpose Is This Waste?"

O earth, earth, earth, thou yet shalt bow Who art so fair and lifted up. Thou yet shalt drain the bitter cup. Men's eyes that wait upon thee now; All eyes shall see thee lost and mean, Exposed and valued at thy worth, While thou shalt stand ashamed and dun While thou shalt stand ashamed and dum Ah, when the Son of Man shall come. Shall He find faith upon the earth?

The strain of mournful meditation which resounds through these lines was the chosen strain of Christina Rossetti all her life long. She was devoted to an austere Muse. Her genius was really ascetic, and the nun-like serenity of her feeling breathes of a constant humility, a constant abnegation. Yet, with this temperament alone she might never have written the works which give her fame. The poet in her could not resist the buoyant call of nature, could not withstand the joy of singing, and from her resigned but courageous lips there fell some of the tenderest of modern lyrics, songs which have not the bell-like music of the great poets at their tunefullest, but songs which have a haunting cadence, a charm half-melanchely, half-happy, which is peculiar to herself. Many such songs have been familiar to the readers of her previous books, but many more of them are included in the present collection and inspire a gratitude to Mr. W. M. Rosset'l, which his shortcomings as an editor cannot invalidate. The dirge beginning "She was as sweet as violets in the spring," the song called "Listening," the ballad of "Husband and Wife," the exquisite poems in the section of the book given to purely devotional subjects-things like "Now They Desire," and "For Under a Crucifix"-all these productions have the spontanelty and the deep, unmistakable feeling which make Christina Rossetti one of the most persuasive of modern claimants for poetical immortality. The importance of this new collection of poems by her is due to the genuineness of her gifts. She owed her power to her inspiration and not to the assidious cultivation of artificial tastes. She had not the inspiration of a great writer, and, like Dante Rossetti, who was even more unsymmetrically developed, she cannot escape a certain limitation of sweep which gives the impression that she sees some things in the world and not others. The universality of the great poets she almost invariably misses. But if she has not their large, impersonal vision she has at least a wonderful intuition in dealing with those things that touch her own heart. No writer of her time exerts so delicate a fascination just through the attractiveness of marked personality. II.

ARTFUL AND ARTLESS VERSE.

There is personality in "The Poetry of Pathos and Delight" (G. P. Putnam's Sons), a slender anthology which Mrs. Alice Meynell has compiled from the works of Coventry Patmore. It is personality of a winning sort. Even in his lightest lyrics Mr. Patmore has always possessed an undercurrent of such dignified feeling as one expects from a high-bred man of the world. There is a distinction about his work, a poise, a suavity which somehow suggests the patrician as much as it does the poet. It also suggests the artist, and, if it is difficult to recognize Mr. Patmore's voice as "the divinest of our time" (which it is. in Mrs. Meynell's opinion), it is, at any rate, certain that few of his contemporaries have been so loyal to a lofty standard of execution. Of the divinity of that Muse who presides over "The Angel in the House" and "The Unknown Eros" possible to feel as convinced as Mrs. Meynell feels; but about her impeccable teste there can be no question whatever. Mr. Patmore as always been consistently epicurean, and the savor of his verse is pure, even, untouched by the turbid floods of uncontrollable passion or the his "Fleet Street Eclogues" (Dodd. Mead & Co.) | and good technical taste. There is first and last

flickerings of uncertain thought. He is not precisely cold. There is too much delicacy of feeling, there is too much grace of imagination in him, for him to be a poet of hard and glittering surface. But to consider him as the poet of pathos and delight, with any expectation that he will unloose the bonds of elemental nature and take his reader captive with storms of pleasure or pain, is to court disappointment. His fortunes as a poet throw helpful light upon this point. If his vogue has been persistently with a scholarly and literary public, if he has been the object of a quiet admiration on the part of fastidious men of letters, and has never swayed a really large and enthusiastic audience, has it not been because his verse has never throbbed with the truest, warmest blood of poetry?

There is not a page in this pretty volume compiled by Mrs. Meynell which is not, in its emperate way, charming, yet the pathos is never heart-shaking, the delight is never overwhelming, and this not merely because Mr. Patmore prefers a gentle measure, but because try as he may, like Browning's thrush, he never can recapture the first, fine careless rapture of human suffering and human joy. The thrush, for all his impotence, might have taught this poet some lessons. Were Mr. Patmore to sing like the bird he might utter a more thrilling cry. As it is he has sung from the beginning like the polished man of letters that he is, and while, from time to time, he has produced poems like "The Letter," which repeat with subtle sympathy and conciliating truth some of the emotions of actual experience, he is, in the main, a trifle too composed. He pleases but he does not strengthen. He is a looker on rather than a dweller at the centre of human life.

Mrs. Meynell thinks, as has been pointed out above, that Mr. Patmore's is "the divinest voice of our time." Mr. Patmore thinks, as he stated in print some time ago, that "Mrs. Meynell's verses are full of delicate and original thought, for the most part faultlessly expressed." It will be seen that these two writers are in perfect sympathy with one another. Yet the "Poems" (Copeland & Day) of the you writer show no imitation of the elder. Mrs. Meynell is, indeed, in no need of a borrowed inspiration. Her songs have always been her own, and in the present volume, which is composed of new and cld verses, she shows again that no matter how deep her admiration may be for the art of Mr. Patmore, she is content to base her own work upon a more artless foundation. She would, perhaps, repudiate the artlessness if it were ascribed to her without qualification. But her evident love of good crafts manship would not be as ingratiating as it is if there were not forever in her lines the force, the movement, the exaltation of a true poet's feeling. It is unlikely that she would care to have her art praised at the expense of her inspiration. If the two were married in extraordinary verse they would be appreciated as one, and Mrs. Meynell would enjoy even a prouder fame than she can boast at present. As it is, the lack of might, of resonance, of the fire which would make her a major poet, cannot spoil the minor felicity of her work.

There was talk some time since of giving to Mrs. Meynell the laurel of Tennyson. The controversy on that subject need not be renewed now, but of this much there can be no doubtthat for a certain exquisite blending of daintiness with serious thought, she is more remarkable than any of her rivals in the field. She would not have made a good Laureate, in all probability, because the holder of that office is oftenest required to "sing upon recorded actions," and there is nothing dramatic about Mrs. Meynell's Muse. She sits "subtly contemplative," and the web of her meditations is woven of the most elusive threads. But if the Laurent were selected for reasons other than those established in history, if it were simply and solely the recognition of a poet's worth that the wreath conveyed, there would have been justice in the choice of Mrs. Meynell. She has sweetness that is not too sweet, strength that is not lawless, insight and sympathy that perform their human offices in the light of a calm and healthy phil-With her intellectual balance, her imaginative buoyance, there goes a lyric lilt which is the crown to her verse.

TENDERNESS AND HUMOR.

Something of the gracious atmosphere in which Mrs. Meynell's verses are envelop flung about "A Pomander of Verse" (A. C. Me-Clurg & Company), a thin little volume by Mies E. Nesbit, which might have exceeded its modest four-score pages without straining the patience of the reader. Miss Nesbit does not take herself too seriously. There is a lightness about her verse which speaks a debonair and happy mind. In the rhymes which fill the last pages of her book she is frankly contemporaneous. local, jocose. And the singer of these satirical refrains is anticipated in the earlier pages, where her cleverness, her deft workmanship, her refined animation, are all dedicated to s tenderer vein of centiment. But whether pensive or gay. Miss Nesbit is always companionable, the wings of poesy flutter through her verses, though they may not bear her up to the highest peaks. If ever a minor poet has justified her existence, Mise Nesbit has done so in the poem called "Inspiration," which is here quoted

- I wandered in the enchanted wood And as I wandered there I sang A song I never understood, Though sweet the music rang.
- Theid a Hly white and fair, Its perfume was a song divine, A song like moonlight and clear air, No rose-hued cloud like mine.
- Beneath pale moon and wind-winged skies My lips were dumb as one drew near, Folded warm wings across my eyes, And whispered in my ear.
- He left a flame-flower in my hand, And bade me sing as heretofore The song I could not understand; But I can sing no more.

His secret seals my dumb lips fast, My lily withered 'neath his wing; But now I understand at last The song I used to sing.

There may be no great weight in this poem, and throughout Miss Nesbit's volume there is nothing which exceeds it in power. But the lines are adequate; they fill to the brim the unpretentious cup of lyric wine which their author is content to offer, and though her draught may fall far short of producing the intoxication of "the true the blushful Hippocrene," she is at least sure of

If Miss Nesbit's poems are remembered, it will be because they have a free impulse behind them were written because their author delights in singing-"tho' none hear beside the singer." Their life is in their spontaneity, their unforced poetic ardor. The same may be said of several of the volumes which next present themselves for discussion, but there are reservations to be noted in connection with some of these latter collections. Mr. Duncan Campbell Scott, for example, in "The Magic House and Other Poems" (Copeland & Day), has abundant zeal and a really vibrant chord within the range of his lyre. At rare intervals he produces a poem like "At the Cedars," a concise narrative, which moves rapidly, depicts an exciting episode with vigor and tact, and gives the pulse a momentary hint of the passion which flows through the rhyme of adventure. But even in this Mr. Scott cannot wholly avoid the metrical monotony which marks most of his work. He makes an engaging appeal through the fine fibre of his thought, and especially through his taste and skill in the delineation of landscape effects, but there is a mechanical regularity about his rhyming that in the long run grows tedlous. Mr. John Davidson would grow tedious, for much the same reason, in

mingling of humorous with pathetic moods in a a passionate imagination. set of dialogues which are full of the vivacity and modernity of a London newspaper office. personages are possibly a trifle too declamatory, but they are drawn to the life in their solemn identification of the nation's interests with their own, and it was a happy concelt of Mr. Davidson's to show the young journalists of England exactly as they are, bumptious enough, but often quick to respond to influences of the sort which have woven these city eclogues through and through with idyllic themes and airs. With a little more elasticity in his gait, with a little more idiomatic rhyme on his lips, Mr. Davidson might deserve high praise. Now his deserts ar scarcely as considerable as some of his perfervid admirers would have us believe, but he is on the road to a justification of their applause

FROM RHETORIC TO BALDNESS. Concerning the ups and downs of public taste, William Watson has something to say in "The Father of the Forest and Other Poems" (Stone & Kimball). There is an "Apologia" at the end of the book an ingenious fragment wherein the author rebukes his critics because they do not see the full value of his devotion to the poets. He has not thought it shame, he says, "To tread in nobler footprints than mine own," and he seems to think he ought to have due eredit for his high intentions, at least. The truth is that no one has ever imputed a base intention to Mr. Watson, and, indeed, his treading in nobler footprints than his own has often been extolled as a worthy ambition. But the inevitable comparison comes, and Mr. Watson's own footprints suffer in the transaction. This very volume contains a redundant "Hymn to the Sea" which is more Swinburnian than Swinburne, and rolls along in expansive metre without conveying any of the majesty which resides in the theme. Mr. Watson's facility, his rhetorical eleverness, his literary criticism, all go to the production of finished, readable, and even attractive verse, but there is naught within the earlier pages of "The Father of the Forest" to show that the critics belabored in the 'Apologia" at the end were wrong. In that plaintive but ill-advised work itself there is a pomposity, there is a pseudo-stateliness, which vividly recalls the fault of Mr. Watson from the beginning. He has always had the makings of an admirable minor poet in him and his pres ent volume falls harmoniously into the co of the best contemporary versifiers-but he tries to be bardic, sublimely impassioned, and then he falls. He would like to be rapt in lofty contemplation, but he gives the impression of

A similar error vitiates the writings of Franis Thompson, whose "Sister Songs: An Offering to Two Sieters" (Copeland & Day) is the outpouring of an original fancy spoiled by a verbal taste that strives to be equally uncon ventional. This visionary poet, who has something of the iridescence of dreams in his lines, is impatient of English, and spins, therefore, the most impossible phrases. He sings of "circumfused wind," he tells how a

Radiate surge of color came, Diffusing blush-wise, palpitant,

and all through this new volume, which is otherwise eloquent of a poetle instinct, he scatters passages like the following:

Next I saw, wonder-whist, How from the atmosphere a mist, seemed, slow uprist; looking from these elfin swarms

I was ware How the air of the Hours, floating down.

Like Nereids through a watery town

Rome, with languors of waved arms

Fluctuous cared their flexile way;

Some were borne half resupine

On the aerial hyaline . .

There is a thin moonbeam of poetry in this fragment, but the diction is worse than affected, it is barbarous. Mr. Thompson might at leas claim that his words have a certain flamboyancy, a certain color. It might be wished that the Poet Laureate had tried for as much, risked as much, in his latest dramatic poem, "England's Darling" (Macmillan & Co.). In this pastiche of narrative and lyric rumination Mr. Austin had a great subject, a great opportunity, but a drab sobriety reigns over the whole dull performance, the book is absolutely colorless from beginning to end. For just one moment, in the second scene of the last act, where Alfred in dis-Oskytel, and finally declares his name and purpree-for this one moment Mr. Austin seems about to be poetic. But the instant passes and the poet is silent. The last pages of the book are devoted to a reprint of "The Passing of Merlin," the elegy on Tennyson which appeared "The London Times" in 1892. It is apposite. Its eulogistic tone ought to impress those critics who have attacked the Laureate for his early denunciations of his predecessor (refusing to admit that a man can ever make a mistake or change his mind), and the smooth ripple of the lines comes as a necessary reminder after "Eng-

land's Darling" that Mr. Austin is not so incapa-

ble as he is sometimes represented to be

When Mr. Austin is satisfied with an emotion, sensation, and plays with it through a few stanzas, he is ant to be worth hearing. When he attempts to elaborate a story, as in "England's Darling," and every one of his other dramatic poems, he becomes uninteresting. The true parrative gift, rare enough in prose, is rarer ethir in poetry; and is not always to be employed by its possessor with equal authority in both directions. Mr. Blackmore's exquisite prose is one of the treasures of modern English fiction. But he has endeavored to write some tales in verse, and his "Fringilla" (The Burrows Brothers Company) is a sadly disappointing book. It has been coplously illustrated by Mr. Will H. Bradley, the last artist in the world whom Mr. Blackmore might have been expected to prefer, but the hectic swirls in which the figures of the pictures are entangled do not serve to lend the book that element of unconventional vivacity which it most obviously needs. "Lita of the Nile," the first long poem in the collection, gives accurately the measure of all that follows, and in this picturceoue romance of old Egyptian life Mr. Blackmore employs a snipsnap which wakes a hunger for the beauty of his prose. The entire contents of "Fringilla" are worth less, it must be confessed, than one lovely page of "Lorna Doone," Miss Mathilde Blind is another writer who has done well with prose, and, attempting poetry, does far less well. In her "Birds of Passage; communicating a glow which lingers sweetly in | Songs of the Orient and Occident" (Chatto & Windus), she is descriptive, florid and accurate enough as to the rhyming of her lines. But she ought to confine herself to the critical studies which have given her the excellent reputation as a writer which she now enjoys. She has the critic's gift of acumen, but she lacks the poet's natural element, the element of pas-

There is no lack of passion in the poetry of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, and in the recent luxurious reprint of "Esther, A Young Man's Tragedy; Together with the Love Sonnets of Proteus" (Copeland & Day), it is interesting to find that the poems are as homogeneous as ever; that they have maintained through their few years the poetic tension which at the start seemed threatened by the more or less sequential scheme in "Esther" and the too great length of the other series. Mr. Blunt is a shade too artificial in his "Esther" sonnets, giving to them a burden of narration which the form is ill-calculated to bear, and when he wrote the "Love Sonnets of Proteus" he failed to give the collection the last touch of his art by suppressing half. Yet his sonnet is, as a rule, so well builded that even a superfluous one is accepted goodhumoredly, and the others are all firmly knit productions, compacted of interesting thought

AN IMPASSIONED CELT.

Mr. Blunt is never so passionate that he must transgress the limits of his form. A sonnet will hold all that he cares to say. For the Celtic rapture of Mr. W. B. Yeats there is nothing in form which curbs his geinus, and he, too, always respects the rhythm in which he is writing. Yet his volume of "poems" (Copeland & Day) is suffused from cover to cover by that witchery which carries the imagination far from all thought of mere rhyme or rhetoric. In some ways this is one of the most interesting books of the decade. A Druidical magic burns in Mr. Yeats's own lines, a glimmer of Irish facry is thrown over every poem, and through and brough the racial peculiarities of the man, writ clear across his work, there runs the mark of a predestined lyrist, the sign of a born poet. This writer would never sit down to the evolution of introspective sonnets. His tongue is loosed in half wild chants by the memories of Irish kings who "broke the ridge of battle with their hands"; he divines the mysteries of the haunted Irish moors and woodlands, he sings a strange, new, dreamy, far-away romance, a song of heroic love and fierce combats by the angry sea-in the heart and texture of his work he is a poet.

Side by side with a hot sympathy for the troubles of his nation there runs the tenderest lessly for the flutter of beauty's robe, and never MRS. BURNETT'S ROMANCE OF THE TIME love for tender things, the poet watching cease missing it because the claims of human joy and sorrow are pressed constantly upon his vision. The curious little plays in his book, "The Countess Cathleen" and "The Land of Heart's Desire," are two weird improvisations of phantasmal charm; not dramatic in any strict sense of the term, but dramas as of some sorcerer's world, where magic lights the stage and the characters act from motives barely comprehensible to mortal minds. Yet Mr. Yeats never really separates his world from ours. Therein lies his power. He transports his reader to a new region, but he does not fool him; he keeps him in a place of ideal realities and fantastic So much of his poetry is new and peautiful, so much of it is impregnated with the fragrance of Queen Mab's enchanted glades, that it is difficult to choose an illustration, especially as some of the best pieces, like "The Rose of Battle," which begins finely-

Rose of all Roses, Pose of all the World! are too long to be reproduced in this place. But the song given below, though one of his minor pieces, is a fair specimen of what Mr. Yeats can do. It is supposed to be sung by the faeries over he outlaw Michael Dwyer and his bride, who had escaped into the mountains:

We who are old, old and gay, O, so old: Thousands of years, thousands of years, If all were told:

Give to these children, new from the world, Silence and love; And the long dew-dropping hours of the night, And the stars above:

Give to these children, new from the world. Rest far from men. Is anything better, anything better? Tell it us then:

Us who are old, old and gay;
O, so old!
Thousands of years, thousands of years. If all were told.

whose mystical genius Mr. Yeats is peculiarly in sympathy, and behind this recollection there ome echoes of the Elizabethans, drifting mists always present in the poetry of Mr. Yeats, never obscuring the sense, but just veiling the sub- her husband's eyes, is not precisely the str dim Celtic dreams.

CHARLES THE TWELFTH.

A CONSISTENT VIEW OF THE SWEDISH HERO.

CHARLES XII. And the Collapse of the Swellsh Empire, 1082-1719. By R. Nisbet Bain. Pp. xviii., 220. G. P. Putnam's Sons. (Heroes of the Na-

Mr. Bain makes out a better case for Charles XII than some other historians are willing to allow. It is possible, simply on the mere statement of facts, to raise most divergent guise sings of England before Guthrum and as to the character of this King-to view him as Quixote; or as a military expert who could not live without war; or as really a man of the highest capacity both for war and for civil affairs, but fettered by the condition of the times. There have been those who looked for a taint of insanity in the Vasa blood, and fancled that they found proofs of this even in the self-contained and almost uniformly victorious Gustavus Adolphus. Once assumed as proved, of course, this alleged mental obliquity might serve to account for every mystery in the acts and character of Charles. But the solution is too easy.

It is also too easy an explanation to say that Charles made war simply for the pleasure which he took in it. This was the spirit of the old knights-errant. The last of the great Swedish Kings would have been more than human if he had failed to take pleasure in a science of which he was a master. But this will not account for a wide-reaching political plan that seemed for many years on the point of being realized. On the other hand, the opinion that Charles was wholly in his right mind is weakened by his conduct in Turkey, and by the final course of obstinacy which ended in his death. There is only this to say, that a man, above all a King, may be far from mad in courting his own death when he sees that all the objects

he had in life must be given up. Mr. Bain's biography aims to show that down were necessary to Swedish policy, if Sweden was to retain control of the Baltic Sea and of its possessions in what are now territories of Russia and Germany. From the Swedish point of view at that time, with the hopes and aims of Gustavus Adolphus in mind, it was not at all unreasonable to covet the whole littoral of the Baltic, or as much of it as would make Sweden supreme in the North. It happened, however, that Swedish wishes in this matter were directly in conflict with those of Russia, Denmark and the nascent Prussia, Charles worsted all these opponents in fair fight, and in the earlier moves of his diplomacy. But he had no soone; got his feet on firm ground south of the Baltic than he found himself on the verge of that 'atal political quicksand, the Poland of his day. Poland has vague outlines as a country, but it never had, even in its best days, anything like national consistency. Any other Swedish King, with the traditions and idean of Charles, would have had to plunge as he did into Polish politics. As an offset to Russian power. Poland must be preserved, and it must be under the rule of a King bound to Sweden. All the delays of Charles in Central Europe and the final disasters which drove him to take refuge in Turkey, were due to the instability of Poland. Charles's first great disappointment and failure were due, not to any

The criticism upon him for his long sojourn in Turkey is met in the same way. The only nations in Europe to which the advance of Russia was a menace at that time were Sweden and Turkey. It was impossible for them to work together, except under just such conditions as had now been brought about. Charles saw the vulnerable points of Russia on the Turkish side, He easily worked out plans for war. But the indecision of the Porte was as hopeless as the disunion of Poland. Turkish military leaders were corrupt and incompetent. Armies were defeated which Charles bimself-and no man of his time

upon him a task that was impossible.

if he were not saved from himself by his skilful in Mr. Blunt's poetry, moreover, the vitality of | was a better authority—thought that he could miserable straits. Its finances were beggarly, its people hopeless, its statesmen without a The final outbreak in Turkey, when Charles was ejected, may well have been an effort on the King's part to bring death upon himself. For he knew as well then as he ever did later that his work for Sweden was done.

It But the Nation was profoundly loyal. roused itself to renewed effort upon his return. In the person of Baron Von Gortz he found a politician who could at least avert misfortune for the time. This Minister evoked almost humble concessions from Peter the Great and skilfully played against each other the Powers which still dreaded Charles's military genius. But Charles himself saw that no concession would be permanent that he could not hold by force of arms. His obstinate refusal to accept the teams offered by Peter was the firmness of despair. At the siege of Frederiksten, he exposed himself to the fire of the enemy with the persistence of a man who was determined to be killed. At last death came, so swiftly that it must have been painless. The whole history is that of a man born out of his proper environment. In another age or as King of a wider realm, Charles might have been far more than an eccentric hero of romance.

NEW NOVELS.

OF QUEEN ANNE.

A LADY OF QUALITY, By Mrs. Frances Hodg-son Burnett. Svo. pp. 363. Charles Scribner's Sons.

THE RED REPUBLIC. By R. W. Chambers. 12mo. pp. 426. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

"A Lady of Quality," by Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, is a remance of the time of Queen Anne, eing, according to the title page, "a most curious, hitherto unknown history, as related by Mr. Isaac Bickerstaff, but not presented to the world of fash-ion through the pages of "The Tatler." The story marks a wide departure from the author's accustomed field of literary observation. Her experiment has not proved altogether successful either, but it must be admitted that "A Lady of Quality" is a much better historical study than might have been expected from the writer of "Little Lord The aloofness, the impersonality, of the author's attitude is remarkable, considering the strong individual bent of her temperament, with its constant drift toward sentimentalism. That the attitude cost her considerable effort the development of the story demonstrates conclusively. trast the first two-thirds of the story with the remaining section and it will be apparent that the author's impulse, which was successfully held in check during the early stages, declared itself imperatively toward the close. Witness the circumstances of Sir Jeoffry's death, and the conversion of the proud, beautiful, worldly Clorinda into sweet, loving Lady Bountiful. Doubtless such conversions were not unknown in the age of Queen Anne, but in saying that the Mrs. Burnett who is most familiar to her readers summarily snatches the pen from the hand of the impersonal historian, in the concluding chapters of "A Lady of Quality," attention is drawn rather to the manner which the transition is worked out than to the transition itself. From an artistic point of view this change is a serious blemish.

The truth is that M.a. Burnett essayed the impossible when she tried to make Clorinda over into lovable character. The logic of the latter's nature does not lead to such a conclusion, and the thor's powers of persuasion are not sufficiently strong to impose it upon the reader. The book is relinquished with the feeling that a woman who could do murder, even though she felt justified in of their indescribable glamor. These mists are the act, and could carry a dead body in the depth of night and stow it in the cellar to conceal it from stance of his song in the mysterious shadows of which to fashion the gentle creature of Mrs. Burnett's concluding pages. There is something wrong in the psychology of this situation. Had the author the motive of Clorinda's stience about the munder of Sir John Oxon to depend upon her fear of discovery, it would have been those convincing. As it is, she is known to have held her peace solely because the hesitated to open her husband's eyes to the true state of affairs, fearing that he "should look at me with changed eyer-feeling that some-what of his rightful meed had gone."

Although "A Lady of Quality" is far from being a perfect book, it is a story which may safely be counted on to interest a wide circle of readers. It has the charm of romance, of an ingenious, complicated plot, and it is composed with considerable skill in the language of the period described. Mrs. Burnett has evidently read widely as a preparation for her task. As regards insight, her obseras to the character of this King-to view him as vation rarely goes below the surface. She is not a crazy royal Knight-errant, a crowned Don permeated by the spirit of the time. That which is easily accessible, the conspicuous peculiarities of manners and customs, she has caught and turned to excellent account. The hand of the practised writer is apparent on every page. But the finished work leaves the impression of having been written up, of having been put forth to satisfy the demand for historical stories, and not in order to reflect the atmosphere of a past age in the light of full and sympathetic scholarship. Conceding to Mrs. Burnett her limitations, she has done well, and allowing for certain inconsistencies in the character of her heroine, she has created an attractive figure. Conan Doyle is on his own ground again in "The

Exploits of Brigadler Gerard." There is no more psychology as in "The Stark Monro Letters," but there are stirring situations, persons rides and hair-breadth escapes, and there is much heroic fighting. Brigadier Gerard is Sherlock Holmes transferre in metamorphosis from the detective bureau to the field of battle; whisked away from contempo rary London to the stirring times of the First Erepire. Just as Sherlock was an indomitable detective, so Gerard is an invincible swordsman. No wonder Napoleon admired the Brigadier, and intrusted him with the dangerous and important mis-sion which is described in the last chapter of this book. The Brigadier is not a man of extraordinary intelligence, in fact, he is rather thick-witted, and this was one reason why the Emperor thought so much of him. But he possessed a soldier's sense of duty and honor. He never went around an obstacle that he could climb over. This eccentricity is admirably described in the chapter entitled "How Brigadier to the residence in Turkey the plans of Charles | Gerard Won His Medal." The Emperor sent him to Paris with a dispatch, which he trusted would fall into the hands of the enemy, and thus throw them off the scent of a deep-laid plan. But Na counted without his host when he Gerard; he did not reckon with the latter's indomitable sword and uncerring pistol, his in repressible courage and superhuman ingenuity in situations. The Emperor was no worse off, howbrigand, who thought to end the Brigadier's brilllant career by tying his legs to two bent trees and releasing the trees. A deceitful monk also deceived himself when he thought to kill Gerard by stabbing him in the eye with a bradawi. The Brigadier recovered from the wound as he did from countless others, and in his old age, when he is supposed to tell the story of his adventures, he be noted that the Brigadier has the usual virtues of men of his stamp; a women in distress is sure of his assistance, and his loyalty is exemplary on all occasions. He has alse a dash of sentimentalism in his character, and, curiously, a taste for art The history of his exploits may be heartly com-"The Red Republic," by R. W. Chambers is

a story of the Paris Commune, which aims to present a vivid and truthful picture of that episode by interesting the reader in the fortunes of a young American art student, whose studio is in the Latin quarter. The book is admirable, despite the apparent haste in which it was written and a tendency defect it, himself, but to fate, which forced at times to florid rhetoric. In the main, however Mr. Chambers writes with restraint and with du regard to truth in his descriptions of scenery and the delineation of character. As regards the latter he has given himself a wide range by building up his plot out of cosmopolitan material. Thus there are encountered an American hero, a French heroine, a Russian general, Irish soldiers, a Greek villain and a generous allowance of French mis creants. The characters are well drawn, although Mr. Chambers has still something to learn ab his women. He approaches them with a certain hesitancy which suggests that they are still mysteries to him. On the other hand, his men are excellent. The same adjective may be applied to his descriptions of the many fights in the story. He handles these with almost masterly skill.

## LITERARY NOTES.

Another work is coming just now from the pen of Mr. H. C. Lea, an historian whose researches have always been carried on in out-of-the-way fields of literature, but whose books have nevertheless proven as interesting as they are learned. The new work, which is published by Mr. Lea himself, in Philadelphia, is to be in two volumes, of which the first has appeared. It is "A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church."
The subject is one for specialists or for students with a whim for ecclesiastical history, yet Mr. Lea has a faculty for making such a theme attractive to more than a professional circle. His "History of the Inquisition in the Middle Ages," a bulky work in three volumes, is portentous in its promise of erudition, but while there is plenty of the latter within its pages, this is one of the most readable of

Izaak Walton, who, through all the two hundred years of his literary existence, has been the peculiar property of the reader with a feeling for the mellow, good old things of literature, is at last fallen into the hands of the dilettante. Mr. Richard Le Gailtenne is to edit a new serial edition of "The Complest Angler," and bring out the work in twelve parts from the London press which has done so much in the decerative publication of his own achievements in poetry and prose. The edition is to be topographical, too, Mr. Edmund H. New hav-ing been commissioned to go over the footsteps of ing been commissioned to go over the footsteps of Walton and Cotton and draw pictures of the places they visited. This pictorial side of the publication promises well, but Mr. Le Gallienne seems hardly the man to edit Walton.

It is said that Mr. Crockett's new novel opens upon a new scene, and in its celebration of "Cleg Kelly, Arab of the City: His Progress and Adventures," departs to a considerable extent from the in his work. The Appletons, who publish the book, announce also "Green Gates," a story by Katherine Meredith, a new American writer; and "Sir Mark," a novel by Anna Robeson Brown, who is also an

There will be published next month the first volme of a work by Mr. George Haven Putnam, entitled "Books and Their Makers During the Middle Ages." A second and concluding volume will soon follow. Mr. Putnam takes up in this work the thread laid down at the end of his earlier volume on "Authors and Their Public in Ancient Times," and he carries his investigations down to 1709, the date of the passage of the first copyright statute in Europe. The book will be published by the Putnams.

It is one of the ills of the time that persons of no importance will insist upon publishing their "memoirs," and that if they omit to do so their "The erary executors" will attend to the matter for The abuse of the public patience has grown to be so severe that three-fourths of the biographical literature published nowadays is scanned with a skeptical and cautious eye. For this reason, if for no other, there is delight in the news that Mr. Birrell is preparing for publication the autobiographical fragment left by Frederick Locker. The sketch of the latter which Mr. Birrell recently printed in "Scribner's Magazine" gave a hint as would do his share of the work in this forthcoming book. He has a tact worthy of Locker's own, and to possess that is to be well armed against the temptations which beset the indiscreet writer. Locker was the incarnation of tact. He could be caustic if he chose. His wit was not allowed to rust, in spite of his modesty and his deep solicitude for the feelings of others. But that solicitude never forsook him, and, though the new autobiography is to be called "My Confidences," there is no possibility of its giving offence to a single soul, in London or anywhere else. What it does promise is a fascinating record of personal experiences which involved some of the most interesting men in the era of a man who was himself a constant source of pleasure to his friends. Locker loved anecdote, and was a connoisseur in the specialty, just as he was in light verse and old books. His stories, his gossip, will be distinguished-or the testimony of current history goes for nought.

Ruskin's authority as a critic has been challenged so many times and in so many places that the in-trinsic value of his work is admitted to be far less firmly fixed than it was ten or fifteen years ago. Yes the public interest in his writings does not seem to diminish in the least. Some one has been making the investigations so common nowadays and finding out exactly what Mr. Ruskin's books bring him in cash. Details of this sort are not often of any earthly consequence to any one but the author and his publisher, yet it is interesting to know that the author's profit alone on a year's sale of Ruskin's books amounts to nearly four thousand pounds. It is interesting for the light it sheds on the circulation of his books, showing that though tabooed by artists and art critics, his hold upon the great reading public is as strong as ever.

article about her father for the March number of "The Cambridge Magazine." She calls it "Longfellow in Home Life," and gives many details of his personal character, but perhaps the most striking note is that which refers to his feeling on a point which affects many authors and poets in different ways. Whatever attitude he may have held about newspaper talk concerning himself, he was not in the least opposed to it on general principles, as is the case with so many poets. "Whenever he saw in a newspaper any pleasant notice of friends or acquaintances, a review of a book, or a subject in which they were interested, he cut it out and kept the scraps in an envelope addressed to the person, and mailed them when several had accumulated.

"Deutsche Sappho" in the person of Johanna Ambresius, a peasant, who has spent her life amid the poorest surroundings. A year or se ago her poems were edited by a friendly professor, and already they have gone through fifteen editions, making her famous among her countrymen, at least. How she will stand the test of criticism outside Germany remains to be seen. Her work has not yet obtained any Continental vogue.

A memorial volume to John Wellborn Root, the architect to whom Chicago and the Columbian Exhibition owed so much, is in preparation by Miss Harriet Monroe, and will be published in the autumn by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. The book will contain abundant biographical matter and elaborate discussion of Mr. Root's work. The latter will be illustrated by reproductions of the architect's own drawings, with etchings and pen sketches by C. F.

A movement is on foot for the erection of a suitable memorial to Dr. Johnson at Lichfield, his birthplace. It is possible that a museum for the preservation of Johnsonian relies and literature may be established. That is the form of memorial which the persons active in the new enterprise prefer, but whether it will be chosen in the long run is a matter of doubt.

There is no end to Napoleonic reminiscence. The presses groan under the writings of historians, diplomats and gossips. But there is one new volume presently to appear which is confidently expected to prove its right to exist. It is to appear in two volumes, under the title of "The Paget Papers," and will contain the dispatches and other documents left by Sir Arthur Paget, who was one of Her Majesty's envoys at various European courts during the period covered by the earlier wars of Napoleon. He was an eye-witness of many historic events which have been described more often by approving than disapproving writers, and the work is likely to be of substantial service to historical stu-

An important manuscript written by Karl Mars has been discovered among the effects of the late Frederick Engels, who was one of the persons charged with the publication of the eminent Socialst's posthumous works. Mrs. Aveling, the daughter of Marx, may be expected to see the book through the press, and when it appears it will present a vivid description of the Germany of the forties. It is entitled "Revolution and Counter-Revolution

The three volumes of "Unpublished Works of Edward Gibbon" will be brought out within a short time. They will contain the historian's famous autoseven in number-and in addition to his journals there will be much correspondence and other data. The "Life" of Gibbon which has iong been known to students, is a patchwork made up from the MSS, now to be accurately printed. While the more familiar work may be accurate enough, se far as it goes, the original sources abound in passages of characteristic wit which have never be given to the world.